

Story 1576 (1987 Tape 3)

Narrator: Bahattin Durak

Location: Bilik village,
Devrek kaza,
Zonguldak Province

Date: June 19,

Two Incompetent Robbers

Temel¹ and Ahmet had been hearing for some time that it was very easy to acquire money in Istanbul. They had heard that people in Istanbul were very cowardly and could very easily be robbed by almost anyone. They decided, therefore, to go to that city and rob a few people.

On their first day in the Istanbul area they came to the approach to a bridge. Temel said to Ahmet, "Now let us rob the first person who tries to cross this bridge."

Unfortunately for them, however, the first person who came along was a boxer. Without knowing what kind of man he was, Temel and Ahmet tried to rob this boxer. When they demanded his money, the boxer delivered a powerful punch to the stomach of each of them, knocking them to the ground. When they tried to arise, he struck them even harder blows. Ahmet finally had strength enough to gasp out, "Temel Temel! Throw your knife at this man!"

¹Temel is the name most often used for the stereotype of the Laz as a dummer or noodlehead. There is no indication that this is a Laz anecdote, and Temel is not an exclusively Laz name, but the name may possibly be used here to suggest the foolishness of the two would-be robbers. The fact that this anecdote is sandwiched between two definitely Laz anecdotes would seem to strengthen that possibility.

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Temel answered with great difficulty, "I'd throw it!
I'd throw it if I could just stand up long enough to do so!"